

COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM: OPTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

*A WORKSHOP HELD IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
THE GHION HOTEL
2003 APRIL 10 & 11*

*ORGANIZED BY FARM AFRICA/SOS SAHEL INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATORY
MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (PFMP)*

**GENEROUSLY FUNDED BY DFID, BTC, GTZ-LUPO &
EU**

**Summary Report
2003 May**

- *It is recognised that the trend of destitution in Ethiopia cannot be reversed without the proactive development of new opportunities for livelihood diversification.*
- *Ethiopia remains one of the greatest 'undiscovered' tourist destinations in Africa.*
- *The majority of current tourism interventions bring little or no benefits to local populations in general, while the chronically poor remain totally excluded.*
- *There is growing interest among holiday-makers to contribute to socially and environmentally responsible tourist initiatives.*
- *Tourism ventures in which local communities are assisted to own a stake and take a direct role in management are almost non-existent in Ethiopia.*
- *A forum has recently been established to promote such community tourism as a means to contribute to improved livelihood security among chronically poor communities. (Workshop funding proposal, 28th February 2003)*

*"Community based tourism is fulfilling, culturally sensitive sustainable tourism to help secure the economic and social well being of communities. Communities include elderly, women, youth, etc. all who participate in designing, management and benefit from and share costs of the tourism."
(Workshop's working definition of CBT, 10th April 2003)*

What is this?

This is a summary report of the Community-based Tourism: *options for sustainable livelihoods* two-day workshop held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 2003 April 10th and 11th.

The workshop was conceived, developed and delivered by the Ethiopian Forum for Community Tourism in collaboration with the Participatory Forest Management Programme, a joint programme of **FARM Africa** and **SOS Sahel**. The workshop was generously funded and supported by DFID, BTC, GTZ-LUPO and the EU.

Over the two day period a total of sixty - five individuals participated in the workshop. This reflects representation from INGOs, local NGOs, Ethiopian regional and federal governments, the private sector (tour operators, travel agents,) donors, CBT practitioners from Uganda and Tanzania, as well as international CBT consultants.

This report presents, at a glance, the highlights of the workshop. It is **Volume One** of three volumes. **Volume Two** documents the workshop proceedings, while **Volume Three** has all the presentations made during the workshop as well as some press clippings.

The five key aims of the workshop were:

1. To raise the profile of CBT among a wide range of actors and its potential to contribute to improved livelihood security among vulnerable populations and their environment in Ethiopia.
2. To clarify what is actually meant by CBT and how it compares with other forms of tourism.
3. To identify the key opportunities and constraints for the development of effective CBT and to improve understanding on how best it can be promoted.

4. To develop a shared vision and mandate for the formalisation of an organisation to promote and support the CBT, and a means to ensure institutional sustainability.
5. To bring together all interested stakeholders and initiate a process of dialogue between them.

The stated outputs of the workshop were:

- ✓ The workshop proceedings disseminated to all stakeholders.
- ✓ A workshop memo for submission to the Ethiopian Tourism Commission (ETC) and to donors to contribute to the on-going process of policy development in support of the promotion of effective CBT.
- ✓ A clear mandate and guidelines for the development of institutional and operational plan for an organisation focussed on the promotion and support of CBT, articulated in a working proposal for submission to donors.
- ✓ The generation of new linkages between different stakeholders.
- ✓ Press outputs and releases to newspapers and television.

The workshop processes were participatory. **Day One** consisted of short, succinct presentations designed to build a common understanding of what was meant by CBT and to gain an appreciation of the global status of CBT. By the end of the day, participants had agreed on a working definition of CBT.

Day Two focused on small group discussions designed to determine how to promote CBT in Ethiopia. At the end of the workshop, in plenary the next steps were agreed on. The key next step was a formation of a working group charged with finding out the legal requirements for an Ethiopian CBT organization and gathering CBT best practices worldwide with documented doable recommendations for the way forward in Ethiopia.

Did you know?

- 12 Countries account for 80 per cent of the world's poor that live on less than a dollar a day. In 11 of these, each with over 10 million poor people, tourism is significant to the economy and/or is growing. Ethiopia is one of the these countries, with 34% of its population living on under US\$1 a day.
- International travel and tourism (ITT) is an important economic sector to Ethiopia. ITT receipts more than 5 per cent of exports or 2 per cent of GDP for 1996. To what extent this has grown significantly between 1990 - 1997 is not known for Ethiopia.
(Source: Pro-Poor Tourism Strategies: Making Tourism Work For The Poor. ODI. iied. CRT April 2001. p48 &49)
- In mid 2002, as a result of a visit by CBI (Netherlands Government's Centre for the Promotion of Exports from Developing Countries), a small group of interested parties started meeting to see how CBT could be encouraged in Ethiopia. Those taking interest included SNV - who have great experience elsewhere in Africa and Asia with CBT; SOS Sahel International - whose North Wollo activities included a CBT pilot; The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Programme - whose activities include setting up CBT to preserve the wolf's habitat. GTZ- with community tourism experiences in Bale Mountains and Lake Wanchi. The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society who are considering CBT activities in some of their areas of work. FARM Africa - who started the first experiment in community benefiting eco tourism in Ethiopia. This group is known as the Ethiopian Forum for Community Tourism. (Source: Funding Proposal for the Workshop. 28th February 2003. p.3)
A number of regional governments were also involved from an early stage. This includes the Tourism Commissions of Oromiya and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region.

In the words of a workshop participant " Community based tourism is a viable alternative, a strategy for sustainable livelihoods in Ethiopia. It must be and can be one of the poverty reduction strategies that contributes to food security."

It is within this context that workshop deliberations need to be understood.

CONTEXT

The workshop was opened by Ato Kinfe Abebe, Executive Director of the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS).

Ato Kinfe indicated that with many rural areas suffering from chronic food insecurity, it was important to look for alternative means of income generation, particularly in off-farm activities. He went on to say "... Tourism can be a means of generating income and enterprise activity in areas in which it would otherwise be difficult to stimulate economic growth..." Ato Kinfe proposed that community based tourism, if managed properly could offer benefits to local communities. The full text of the opening speech is recorded in **Volume II** of the workshop proceedings.

Four presentations were made which were designed to give some background information regarding CBT, explore definitions and build a common understanding regarding CBT. The presentations covered:

- ✓ the definitions of different types of tourism;
- ✓ tourism for sustainable livelihoods;
- ✓ tourism for conservation; and
- ✓ the government's perspective on sustainable CBT.

At the end of the presentations, in plenary, a healthy discussion evolved. Participants' discussions ranged from who is community? How is representation of all groups guaranteed? What are revenue sharing strategies? What is the government's policy? Is CBT only for the rural areas, what about the urban areas? What is the role of NGOs, and the private sector?

In sharing experiences, ideas and understandings, the plenary noted that when dealing with community based tourism, it was important to be aware of and take into consideration all the conflicting interests. These included but were not exclusively, the environment, development, the needs of the tourists, the community's needs and the individuals' needs.

" What defines the community is the nature of the resources. E.g. Sofomer - the communities who live around the cave, this is the community."

" This question of community highlights the importance of the issue. The concept of "community" is very illusive. It can mean different things to different people. So one has to clearly define what it means in a particular context by considering issues of representation and legitimacy. It should take into consideration the involvement of marginalized groups, women, youths, the disabled and so forth."

These presentations and discussions were followed by five presentations, which covered experiences of CBT in Uganda, Tanzania, South Africa, Namibia, The Gambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Senegal, Nepal and Ecuador. The common areas of all the "case studies" presented was the need to have an enabling government environment, the need to have community ownership around the product, the process and an agreed to strategy for revenue sharing. It was also pointed out that ongoing training of all key stakeholders was essential. That there must be a business plan that includes marketing and promotion strategies, and the need for an appropriate institutional framework that supports the local CBTs as well as involvement with the tourism private sector.

"...(CBT) is a business, think marketing; communities deserve careful planning and real involvement; engage in continuous discussion and training; make sure appropriate institutional framework is in place.

"...(CBT) is a business, apply a business approach from the beginning, for example have members contribute financially to training; recruit professionals to run the secretariat; continuously lobby, advocate and network; and develop a strategic and business plan for the organization."

CBT in Ethiopia ...means

In plenary, the participants agreed on a working definition of CBT:

"Community based tourism is fulfilling, culturally sensitive sustainable tourism to help secure the economic and social well being of communities. Communities include elderly, women, youth, etc. all who participate in designing, management and benefit from and share cost of the tourism."

The workshop reconvened on Day Two with a reconfirmation of the working definition of CBT in Ethiopia. Workshop participants spent the day in small group discussions. There were two main discussions.

In the first group discussion, participants were divided into four groups. Two groups were asked to discuss the potential/possibilities and constraints for the promotion of CBT in Ethiopia. The other two groups were asked to prepare a presentation on CBT in Ethiopia as they were attending a conference in Ecuador, 2013. They were to focus on their experiences in the past ten years, stating the successes and the challenges they faced and the strategies applied by them to overcome the challenges.

Potential and possibilities groups highlighted the range of tourist attractions endemic to Ethiopia. They also identified the peaceful environment of Ethiopia coupled with the relative low cost of living. The constraints were identified as a lack of enabling legislation, limited resources, the low level of awareness of CBT as an alternative livelihood option, the international perceptions about Ethiopia and the airfares to travel to Ethiopia from Europe or North America. In suggesting solutions, it was suggested that there needs to be the creation of a responsible body for CBT promotion and support, locally, nationally and internationally.

The two groups positioned in 2013, both indicated the establishment of CBT organizations locally and nationally, community awareness of CBT, effective partnership with government, CBTs and the private sector in joint ventures, and, in general an enabling environment for CBTs. The challenges included conflict of interests over the resources in the CBT areas as well as conflicting and contradictory policies between tourism and urbanization.

NOW WE KNOW WHAT IS CBT...
WHAT NEXT?

With both group processes of thinking through what is appropriate for Ethiopia leading in the same direction, the facilitator suggested that it was time to look at the emerging themes. These were:

- ✓ Marketing/Booking
- ✓ Best practices and knowledge gaps
- ✓ capacity building
- ✓ advocacy

The workshop participants were once again divided into small groups. Each group was assigned a theme and instructed to strategically think about each theme, within the context of Ethiopia. They were instructed to design a matrix with the questions Who, What, When and How.

Marketing/Booking Group

This group suggested that there needed to be a marketing strategy that recognised the different potential tourists: international, national and expatriates as each group required a different approach. For each group, suggestions were made regarding what medium best suited the group. For example, for the international tourist: web sites and travel guides. For the national tourists: word of mouth and local travel agents. For the expatriates: coffee table books and association meetings. National bodies and local communities were also named as needing a specific strategy. With regard to booking, it was stated that this was best done through a CBT association who would have the most current information of availability of types of attraction and specific site information.

Best Practices and Knowledge Gaps Group

Activities were identified with "who" will do "what" "when" and "how" stated. The group suggested that the workshop participants investigate the formation of an appropriate association by forming a working group from those around the table. This includes a review of best practices in the industry, researching and documentation of lessons learnt. The clarification of the legal requirements for the formation of a CBT association is also needed. They further indicated that this should lead to supporting the establishment of a pilot CBT with a local NGO. This, they said could be done with donor support.

Capacity Building Group

The capacity building group indicated that capacity building was a continuous activity. They indicated that all key stakeholders - the various communities of interests, donors, private sector tourism entrepreneurs, government officials and NGOs - needed to build their understanding of CBT and its potential for contributing to sustainable livelihoods. This, they stated, could be done through a variety of different forums. They identified, for example, exchange visits, formal and informal training and workshops.

Advocacy Group

An advocacy strategy is needed stated the group. There needs to be a co-ordinating body in charge of designing and implementing a CBT advocacy strategy. Policy makers, decision makers in the government as well as parliamentary groups need to be made aware of the need for the incorporation of CBT into all aspects of tourism and education so that CBT is understood supported and fully integrated into any legislation. The private sector as well needs attention so that their understanding and subsequent commitment to CBT is demonstrated.

Plenary and Next Steps

One of the most important issues that came out of all the four groups' discussions, was the need to assign a working group, a task force, that would take forward the promotion of CBT in Ethiopia. Membership in the working group was on a voluntary basis and participants were asked to join. Eleven individuals volunteered. Their interests and expertise cover the spectrum of NGOs, the private sector, community development and international consultants in CBT. The individuals are:

Mark Chapman, Azebe Girmai, Dr. Zelalem Tefera, Elias Mekonnen, Kinfe Abebe, Ben Irwin, Dr. Stuart Williams, Zelalem Temesgen, Mekdem Fikre, Danny Winhoud, and Matthias Reusing.

The group agreed to meet on April 17, 2003 over the lunch hour.

At that time next immediate steps would be decided. A Terms of Reference for the group, it was agreed would be its first activity.

It was also agreed that the expertise of colleagues from Tanzania and Uganda would be accessible through electronic mail.

A verbal evaluation was conducted. Participants indicated that they felt that the workshop had accomplished its objectives.

The workshop was officially closed by the executive director of FARM Africa, Dr. Seme Debela.

Please see Volume II and III for detailed workshop proceedings.

"All of us have a stake in advocating for CBT in Ethiopia and we should take back the knowledge and discussions of the workshop to the workplace and share."

NEXT STEPS: FOR ALL OF US